

# HRD

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

HCAMAG.COM  
ISSUE 14.7

**BIG DATA = BIG OPPORTUNITIES**  
Discovering the data scientist in you

**DESTINED TO FAIL?**  
HR's role in technology rollouts

**LEGAL SPECIAL REPORT**  
From unfair dismissal to reasonable working hours



# NAVIGATING A GLOBAL HR MATRIX

HR at NBCUniversal

**AUSTRALIAN HR AWARDS** Finalists revealed!



# CAREER TRANSITION

## EXITING WITH GRACE AND DIGNITY

Redundancies may be an unfortunate fact of life, but there are sensitive and even beneficial ways in which employers can assist exiting employees. *HRD* investigates career transition best practice in 2016

**“CAREER TRANSITION** is not just about the next job. Although that’s very important, it’s a whole lot more than that.” This comment from Alison Monroe, CEO of Sageco and a 20-year veteran of the

they have become the rule rather than the exception when supporting exiting employees.

“Organisations need to bolster internal competencies within their teams: executives



**“It’s not just about retirement being the trigger for transition services; it could be workforce change, redundancy or redeployment”**

**Alison Monroe**

outplacement services industry, sums up the new approach employers are taking with their exiting employees.

Instead of a few résumé writing tips and interview suggestions, as might have been sufficient in the past, employers in 2016 are taking a more holistic view of career transition. Today, transition services are about being proactive rather than reactive;

need to lead the change; people leaders need to manage the change; and HR needs to guide and advise and provide the support mechanisms,” Monroe says.

“Finally, the people themselves need to acknowledge that change is constant, but it doesn’t have to be something that is done to them. They can actually embrace and respond to it in a positive way.”

### Supporting all employees

Sageco itself has undergone significant change in the past five years. Where the firm once specialised in assisting mature-age workers with career transition, and this remains core to its business, its services have widened. Today, 50% of Sageco’s work encompasses broader business transition services.

Client feedback to Sageco suggested that the same services were required for all employees, regardless of age or level. It’s not only retirement that is the trigger; there are other times when these services are needed.

“It’s not just about retirement being the trigger for transition services; it could be workforce change, redundancy or redeployment. It could even be promotions where people are promoted because they flourish in their role and are then elevated to a leadership position and they may struggle with that,” Monroe says.

Complex, large-scale changes within organisations, and new technology such as real-time reporting back to clients, have also altered the landscape.

Most significantly, the gap between ‘work’ and ‘life’ has narrowed. Employers are not just concerned about skill and capability gaps or professional development. They’re thinking of ways in which they can support people around their financial, physical and mental health – areas that might traditionally have been branded as ‘life planning’.

As Monroe states, if an employer supported its people while they were employed with them, the same ‘duty of care’ should extend to them when they are leaving the company.

To meet these challenges, Sageco launched a holistic framework called Envisage (see box). This covers six key areas that are impacted on by change – only one of which is an employee’s career.

## THE ENVISAGE FRAMEWORK

Alison Monroe outlines her firm's groundbreaking transition program:



**Identity:** "This is at the core when people are going through a transition. If they were overly attached to a role or organisation they may need to repurpose and figure out who they are outside of the job. What sort of status and self-esteem does it bring that you need to be aware of when looking for the next role? For mature workers in particular there can be such a sense of identity and status linked to a role. However, it can impact on everyone, regardless of career stage or age."



**Money:** "This is not about us providing advice around financial planning, but we're often a catalyst for people to see a financial planner. This is about people being clear about the future they want and how much money they need to support that future. We're trying to get people to identify any gaps in their financial literacy so they can address that."



**Career:** "This encompasses all of the essentials of self-assessment and career options going forward, and how people can enhance their job search success. What we're finding is it's not a one-dimensional job search anymore: someone may no longer say, 'Well, I've always been an accountant so I'll look for another accounting role'. The opportunities now are far broader by industry or work type – you might become a contractor or start your own business or join a start-up. We're finding transitions are not as linear as they once were."



**Health:** "We know that one in five people in our population have some sort of mental health disorder or chronic health issue at some point in their life. The reality is there are several things that trigger these issues and redundancy is one of them. If we ignore the health and wellness aspect, there are issues under the surface that will be an inhibitor for people looking for a new job. We need to work with people and encourage them to optimise their health and wellbeing throughout the job search process."



**Relationships:** "This is about identifying who the most important people in your life are – at home and at work – and what sort of conversations you need to have that you are not currently having."



**Future goals:** "This is about consolidating all of this work on future goals and being really clear on articulating what success looks like and in what timeframe."

### Diversity in focus

Sageco has retained its expertise in assisting mature-age workers, and D&I remains at the forefront of all the firm's services.

"We're looking to weave diversity thinking into all aspects of the transition process," says Monroe, who is a Workplace Gender

### Equality Agency ambassador.

Last year Sageco ran pay equity wisdom circles around the country for clients. These are designed to educate, raise awareness and start the debate around the causes and effects of pay inequity, and show ways in which it can be addressed.

"There were very tangible outcomes from those workshops," Monroe recalls. "One particular HR director said her action off the back of the wisdom circle was to go back that day and talk to her CEO about giving one of their female leaders a \$50,000 pay rise to put her on par with male counterparts. And it happened. She got the result. She was able to go back with the data, the evidence and business case and tackle pay inequity."

This year Sageco has gone one step further by introducing gender pay gap workshops for both men and women. "Obviously men can be the champions of change. Every male who goes through our program can be educated on this issue and keep it top of mind as a manager in the future; or in their personal life – they have female partners, sisters, daughters. If they're not aware of the issue they can't advocate for it. For the females in the room the onus is on giving them the capability and the confidence to negotiate a better pay outcome in their next role."

### Outcomes

Offering career transition services is in part about risk management: risk to reputation; risk to brand; risk of being sued; even the much more tragic risk of an exiting employee taking their own life. Monroe adds that a good transition program helps breed a conversation culture in organisations; it helps leaders have difficult conversations with staff.

"The way we treat our exiting employees sends a very clear message to those remaining so it can have a very real impact on engagement, retention and of course transition outcomes," she concludes. **HRD**

Sageco guides and inspires you through organisational change, transforming the career experience of people at all ages and stages to create a positive future. Our specialist transition solutions help those facing a new future due to redeployment, redundancy and outplacement, retirement, role change or leadership change. For further information, email [alison.monroe@sageco.com.au](mailto:alison.monroe@sageco.com.au), or phone 1300 72 4343, or visit [sageco.com.au](http://sageco.com.au).